

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 731

By Matheny

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Tullahoma Fine Arts Center and celebrate its cultural contributions to our state.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to specially recognize those fine institutions that bring the joys of artistic expression and culture to the citizens of this State; and

WHEREAS, the Tullahoma Fine Arts Center is one such estimable institution that is making a substantial contribution to the cultural fabric of this State; the Center has filled a vacant niche in the Tullahoma arts community and is viewed by many as a vital contributor to making Tullahoma a first-class city; and

WHEREAS, with some parts of the structure dating to 1852, the Baillet House is the oldest building in Tullahoma and provides an ideal site for the Center, with unlimited potential as a setting to enhance the enjoyment of visual masterpieces from around the world; and

WHEREAS, the Center provides a new chapter in the history of one of Tennessee's most storied locations, as tradition holds that the site of the Baillet House was the location of Tullahoma's first school, built by the railroad company, and the home was used by both Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War as a hospital; and

WHEREAS, the Baillet family built their home in 1868 at 401 South Jackson Street, across from land originally planned to be town's square, but the town's center actually developed several blocks to the north, where three of the Baillet sisters owned and operated a millinery shop; and

WHEREAS, a century after the home was constructed, a group of volunteers restored the building for use as a center for the arts; they wonderfully preserved the historic elegance of the venue and created a space that delights the eye with each view and provides an idyllic setting for the enjoyment of the visual arts; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, the Center added a new wing, the Regional Museum of Art, which brought a modern art gallery to the museum and expanded classroom, office, and storage space; the wing is located in a two-story brick building that was built with the assistance of a grant from the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Center was refurbished for the 2003 fall season following a major water leak; Representative Judd Matheny, Representative George Fraley, and Senator Jerry Cooper were special guests at the reopening; and

WHEREAS, the occasion marked the return of a great resource to the region; this cultural oasis houses 225 pieces of art throughout the year and is the only museum in Tennessee to host the American Watercolor Society's National Touring Exhibit, with the exhibition to occur in March of 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Tullahoma Fine Arts Center is a hub of cultural education and provides classroom space and other resources that can be used for events related to the museum's mission and exhibitions; and

WHEREAS, the Center's leadership has put into place numerous resources to broaden the horizons of Tennesseans and to provide a new and inspiring experience with each visit; and

WHEREAS, the Center has been welcomed by a thankful community and encourages and benefits from community donations of art and sponsorships of pieces; and

WHEREAS, in addition to contributing significantly to the cultural fabric of Coffee County, the Center is an effective advertisement for the exemplary quality of life in Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Tullahoma Fine Arts Center has inspired applause from the arts community of our nation and brought honor to the state of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby join with the administration, staff and volunteers of the Tullahoma Fine Arts Center and with the citizens of Tennessee in celebrating the Center's invaluable contributions to our State and its cultural landscape, thank the good people

associated with the Center for their service to Tennessee, and wish them every future success in their cultural endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.